DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 210 620 CG 015 646

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TITLE Fears of a Heterogeneous, Nonpsychiatric Sample: A Factor Analytic Study.
PUB DATE Aug 81
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (89th, Los Angeles, CA, August 24-26, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Anxiety; *Attitude Measures; Death; Factor Analysis; *Fear; Psychological Studies; *Research Methodology; *Sex Differences

ABSTRACT

Previous studies on common fears have been vague and have not met requirements for using factor analysis. To avoid some of these problems, a broader age range and a separate analysis of males and females were designed for a sample of 545 individuals, ages 15-89, who responded to 133 fear-scale items. "Death of a loved one" was the greatest fear for both sexes. Items with a mean of three or more on the seven-point scale were factor analyzed. The items meeting the criteria for the female sample resulted in five "fear" factors including: (1) social rejection; (2) unpredictable danger; (3) aggression; (4) small animals; and (5) death of self or loved one. The items analyzed for males resulted in two "fear" factors similar to the first two "fear" factors analyzed for women, i.e., social rejection and unpredictable danger. The findings suggest that these results may be closer than those of previous studies to the structure of the cognitive component of fears in the general population. (Author/JAC)

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FEARS OF A HETEROGENEOUS, NONPSYCHIATRIC SAMPLE: A FACTOR ANALYTIC STUDY

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CG 015646

Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, CA, August 1981.

Fears of a Heterogeneous, Nonpsychiatric Sample:

A Factor Analytic Study

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ABSTRACT: A sample of 345 females and 200 males responded to 133 fear-scale items. Respondents were heterogeneous regarding age and socio-economic background. "Death of a loved one" was the highest fear for both sexes. Items with a mean of 3 or more on the 7-point scale were factor analyzed. The 52 items meeting the criterion for the female sample resulted in five factors: social rejection, unpredictable danger or threat to life, aggression, small animals, and death of self and loved ones. The 21 items analyzed for the males resulted in two factors similar to the females' first two.

The most widely cited study of the distribution of common fears in the general population is that of Agras, Sylvester, and Oliveau (1969). These investigators interviewed a sample of 325 persons in what was described as "a probability sample of the household population of the Greater Burlington [Vermont] area" (p. 151). Unfortunately, the published report of this survey is flawed in several respects. We are not told which "40 commonly feared situations" comprised the interview schedule, nor are their definitions of "incidence rates" and "prevalence rates" at all clear (see p. 153).

Wade (1978) critically reviewed the factor analytic literature on common fears and found that none of the studies satisfied all the requirements of using factor analysis: adequate subject-to-variable ratio, adequacy of the correlation matrix, determination of interpretable factors, and replicability. Wade conducted a study which satisfied these requirements, using 400 introductory psychology students and the 40-item Fear Survey Schedule I (Rubin, Lawlis, Tasto, & Namenek, 1969). Wade found a five-factor solution best fit the data. The factors were labeled vio-

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lations of societal norms, nuisance animals, injury, interpersonal conflict, and isolation or alienation. Wade gives no gender breakdown of the students. It is well documented that females report more fears and more intense fears than males, and as Rachman (1978) notes, physiological measures support this difference.

If one is to draw conclusions on the incidence and distribution of common fears in the general population, the sample should not be confined to college students, but should include all ages and educational backgrounds. Nor, of course, should psychiatric samples be employed. Male and female samples should be analyzed separately, since they represent two different population distributions of fears.

An obvious problem in generalizing the results of studies of fears is that the results are totally dependent on what items are chosen for the questionnaire and resultant factor analysis. Although there is considerable overlap among the various fear survey schedules, there are a number of items which are unique to each schedule.

The present study was designed to avoid some of the problems of other studies. A sample much broader in age range and socioeconomic background than a sample of college students is employed; males and females are analyzed separately; the statistical requirements for factor analysis are satisfied; and items for the factor analyses are selected for their measurement of fear.

Method

The subjects were 345 females and 200 males who turned in useable questionnaires. Respondents were recruited from a variety of sources, but most of them were relatives and acquaintances of students and employees at Purdue University Calumet, an urban commuter campus serving Northwest

Indiana. Respondents ranged in age from 15 to 89. Approximately 45% of the females and males were over 24. A wide range of educational and occupational backgrounds was represented. Tables 1 through 4 break down the sample by gender by age, education, occupation, and ethnic group.

The questionnaire consisted of an open-ended question on what things the respondent feared the most, followed by 133 items which were derived from the scales of Wolpe and Lang (1969) and Geer (1965). Items from the two scales judged to be essentially the same were not duplicated. The seven-point rating scale used by Geer was employed. It ranged from "None" (1) through "Terror" (7).

Results and Discussion

The mean score on all items for females was 2.82, ranging from 1.12 to 5.24. The males' mean of 2.26 ranged from 1.08 to 4.60, and was significantly below the females' ($t = 8.07$, $df = 543$, $p < .001$). For most respondents, the open-ended questions elicited no high-fear responses not found among the 133 items. The most frequently appearing new fears rated as "Terror" were "Rape" for women (10 cases), and "War" for men (7 cases). We speculate that had these two fears been added to our lists they would have received relatively high mean ratings.

Tables 5 and 6, for females and males, respectively, show the means in descending order, standard deviations, and distributions of responses for the 133 items. Weighted corrections for the size of each age category were employed in generating these statistics to equalize the effects of the greater number of respondents in the two youngest categories.

Among the items with a mean rating of at least 3, in only one instance does an item have a higher mean rating by males: "Being punished by God." In two situations, "Losing control of yourself" and "Not being

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF FEMALES AND MALES BY AGE CATEGORY

	GENDER	
AGE CATEGORY	FEMALES	MALES
15 - 17	86	30
18 - 24	102	57
25 - 34	52	32
35 - 44	34	25
45 - 54	37	27
OVER 55	32	27
MISSING DATA	2	2
TOTAL	345	200

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF FEMALES AND MALES BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

	GENDER	
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	FEMALES	MALES
GRADE SCHOOL OR LESS	8	5
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	75	32
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	107	51
SOME COLLEGE	101	63
COLLEGE DEGREE	30	23
SOME GRADUATE SCHOOL	9	8
GRADUATE DEGREE	13	16
MISSING DATA	2	2
TOTAL	345	200

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF FEMALES AND MALES BY OCCUPATION

	GENDER	
OCCUPATION	FEMALES	MALES
EXECUTIVE OR MANAGER	5	17
HOUSEWIFE	58	1
PROFESSIONAL	42	28
CLERICAL WORKER	54	1
FOREMAN OR SKILLED WORKER	7	45
SALESPERSON	20	4
SEMISKILLED OR UNSKILLED WORKER	3	17
STUDENT	142	71
OTHER	11	15
MISSING DATA	3	1
TOTAL	345	200

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF FEMALES AND MALES BY ETHNIC GROUP

	GENDER	
ETHNIC GROUP	FEMALES	MALES
BLACK	32	21
WHITE	297	168
ORIENTAL	2	0
HISPANIC	10	9
NATIVE AMERICAN	2	1
MISSING DATA	2	1
TOTAL	345	200

TABLE 5

RANK, MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND DISTRIBUTION OF FEAR RATING FOR EACH ITEM RATED BY FEMALES (N=345)

				FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES						
				NONE	VERY LITTLE	LITTLE	SOME	MUCH	VERY MUCH	TERROR
RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	DEATH OF A LOVED ONE	5.24	1.71	7.0	2.0	5.2	13.1	16.6	30.7	25.3
2	ILLNESS OR INJURY TO LOVED ONES	5.04	1.68	6.9	2.7	7.0	14.0	20.2	30.5	18.7
3	FIRE	4.44	1.85	10.4	7.3	10.1	20.6	19.4	16.4	15.9
4	AUTO ACCIDENTS	4.36	1.95	12.8	8.6	9.7	17.2	16.8	20.2	14.8
5	DEEP WATER	4.29	2.09	15.7	9.5	9.8	15.0	14.6	16.1	19.4
6	MICE OR RATS	4.22	1.92	11.9	11.0	12.4	17.0	19.2	13.5	15.1
7	PROSPECTS OF A SURGICAL OPERATION	4.19	1.90	11.4	10.8	12.1	22.5	13.3	15.6	14.3
8	UNTIMELY OR EARLY DEATH	4.15	2.17	21.5	8.2	5.4	15.9	12.9	19.7	16.4
9	SPEAKING IN PUBLIC	4.14	1.78	10.5	10.4	12.6	23.7	16.3	17.1	9.5
10	LOOKING DOWN FROM HIGH BUILDINGS	4.09	2.02	14.6	12.5	11.7	18.4	11.4	15.8	15.6
11	WEAPONS	3.98	1.87	14.9	10.7	10.9	22.4	16.2	15.8	9.1
12	BATS	3.97	1.84	10.8	15.6	13.4	19.2	19.4	10.2	11.5
13	HURTING THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS	3.95	1.54	9.5	8.7	15.9	28.2	20.5	15.2	2.0
14	STINGING INSECTS	3.94	1.87	14.4	12.4	11.8	19.7	18.2	14.6	8.9
15	ROLLER COASTERS	3.86	2.15	23.0	9.8	9.3	19.0	11.1	11.2	16.6
16	DEATH	3.85	2.14	24.9	6.4	9.4	19.9	10.9	13.6	14.8
17	FEELING REJECTED BY OTHERS	3.74	1.66	13.9	10.5	15.5	28.4	15.2	12.9	3.6
18	FAILURE	3.74	1.82	15.3	15.8	10.7	22.7	15.0	14.8	5.7
19	WITNESSING SURGICAL OPERATIONS	3.70	2.07	24.3	10.1	12.9	12.1	14.7	17.0	8.9
20	SUFFOCATING	3.69	2.21	28.1	9.4	8.4	16.3	10.5	11.8	15.3
21	HARMLESS SNAKES	3.65	2.22	28.6	8.2	13.1	13.4	9.3	11.5	15.9
22	FALLING	3.62	1.82	17.6	13.7	14.6	21.1	14.3	13.3	5.4
23	STRANGE DOGS	3.58	1.90	19.9	12.9	14.7	22.1	11.8	9.2	9.4
24	PEOPLE WHO SEEM INSANE	3.54	1.68	14.3	15.6	19.2	21.5	15.9	9.3	4.1
25	LOOKING FOOLISH	3.47	1.63	15.1	14.5	20.9	21.6	15.3	9.9	2.5
26	FEELING DISPROVED OF	3.46	1.63	16.2	13.7	17.4	27.5	14.2	7.6	3.4
27	BEING WITH DRUNKS	3.45	1.90	23.3	11.7	16.2	19.3	10.6	12.7	6.2
28	PARTING FROM FRIENDS	3.38	1.77	23.0	11.3	14.7	23.6	13.0	12.1	2.3

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEMALES FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
29	ILLNESS	3.38	1.79	21.5	12.1	19.0	22.5	10.4	8.6	5.9
30	SWIMMING ALONE	3.36	2.17	30.0	14.5	13.8	8.8	9.9	9.8	13.2
31	SEEING A FIGHT	3.32	1.75	22.5	13.8	14.8	22.1	14.7	8.9	3.2
32	BEING SEEN UNCLOTHED	3.31	1.83	21.1	17.1	17.8	20.4	9.1	7.1	7.4
33	BEING IN A FIGHT	3.30	1.89	27.3	12.4	12.7	18.4	14.1	10.5	4.7
34	BEING CRITICIZED	3.30	1.59	18.2	13.9	21.5	23.3	14.7	6.3	2.2
35	ANGRY PEOPLE	3.30	1.68	21.5	13.4	16.6	24.3	11.6	11.5	1.1
36	BEING DRESSED UNSUITABLY (WEARING WRONG CLOTHES FOR THE OCCASION)	3.28	1.64	19.2	12.7	24.6	21.9	10.4	7.9	3.3
37	LOSING CONTROL OF YOURSELF	3.28	1.73	22.1	14.5	18.3	16.7	16.8	9.5	2.0
38	HIGH PLACES ON LAND	3.26	1.99	26.8	18.4	11.7	14.8	8.1	13.9	6.4
39	MAKING MISTAKES	3.26	1.60	17.7	18.4	17.7	24.6	12.2	7.5	1.9
40	DENTISTS	3.24	1.89	25.5	17.4	12.5	18.3	11.1	9.4	5.9
41	BEING PUNISHED BY GOD	3.20	2.18	38.2	9.1	10.0	11.0	11.1	10.2	10.3
42	BEING SELF CONSCIOUS	3.18	1.67	22.2	17.0	15.2	24.1	11.4	8.3	1.9
43	LOSING A JOB	3.17	1.78	29.3	9.2	16.4	18.9	15.0	9.6	1.7
44	HARMLESS SPIDERS	3.16	1.98	31.3	13.8	11.8	17.9	9.1	8.7	7.4
45	THOUGHTS OF BEING MENTALLY ILL	3.14	2.13	34.4	15.8	9.4	13.2	7.2	9.1	10.9
46	NOT BEING A SUCCESS	3.14	1.81	27.6	13.6	17.0	17.7	11.4	9.0	3.7
47	LIGHTNING	3.12	1.91	29.0	15.4	14.7	17.1	8.9	8.5	6.3
48	CRAWLING INSECTS	3.12	1.72	22.9	20.5	13.2	23.3	9.1	7.8	3.3
49	TAKING WRITTEN TESTS	3.11	1.74	25.4	17.4	13.0	23.0	10.8	7.1	3.4
50	BEING MISUNDERSTOOD	3.09	1.50	19.7	17.6	19.7	25.7	12.3	3.6	1.4
51	ONE PERSON BULLYING ANOTHER	3.09	1.64	23.9	15.1	18.8	22.9	10.0	7.6	1.6
52	TOUGH LOOKING PEOPLE	3.08	1.50	17.9	19.5	23.4	24.2	8.3	4.3	2.3
53	PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS	2.99	1.81	28.4	18.9	15.0	16.6	9.5	6.7	4.8
54	SUDDEN NOISES	2.98	1.60	23.9	18.3	18.9	23.4	7.0	6.8	1.7
55	ENCLOSED PLACES	2.98	1.88	32.3	16.1	14.0	14.5	9.1	9.8	4.2
56	FLYING INSECTS	2.98	1.66	23.9	22.6	15.8	17.3	12.5	5.4	2.5
57	RECEIVING INJECTIONS	2.98	1.83	30.1	17.1	16.4	15.1	8.6	8.3	4.4
58	BEING ALONE	2.94	1.67	25.8	21.1	15.0	21.0	7.2	7.6	2.2
59	DEAD PEOPLE	2.93	1.93	35.6	16.0	10.4	14.4	10.8	7.0	5.8
60	BOATING	2.91	1.88	34.1	16.1	13.7	14.8	8.4	7.9	5.0
61	BEING WATCHED WORKING	2.90	1.63	25.3	22.5	15.8	19.8	9.7	3.9	2.9

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES: NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
62	OPEN WOUNDS	2.88	1.56	22.5	25.9	18.7	16.1	8.9	7.1	0.8
63	JOURNEYS BY AIR-PLANE	2.87	2.04	39.9	15.4	9.9	11.5	6.8	8.8	7.8
64	BEING IN A STRANGE PLACE	2.84	1.47	21.7	24.4	21.1	21.1	5.3	5.1	1.2
65	DARKNESS	2.83	1.80	34.6	16.5	13.6	15.4	10.4	5.4	4.2
66	BEING IGNORED	2.83	1.62	31.0	14.7	17.7	22.5	7.2	5.2	1.7
67	HUMAN BLOOD	2.77	1.80	37.1	16.4	11.2	15.1	10.8	6.6	2.9
68	THUNDERSTORMS	2.74	1.86	40.4	13.3	12.9	14.7	6.6	7.9	4.1
69	BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR DECISIONS	2.73	1.58	29.9	21.5	15.5	19.7	6.5	6.0	1.0
70	PREMATURE HEART BEATS (MISSING A BEAT)	2.73	1.72	36.5	15.0	14.7	16.8	9.3	5.4	2.3
71	ENTERING A ROOM WHERE OTHER PEOPLE ARE ALREADY SEATED	2.69	1.58	26.3	30.4	14.7	15.5	5.6	5.1	2.4
72	STRANGERS	2.65	1.42	28.1	23.2	16.1	25.5	3.2	3.4	0.5
73	DOCTORS	2.65	1.74	40.5	13.9	12.5	17.0	6.5	8.6	1.0
74	DEAD ANIMALS	2.61	1.75	40.5	15.8	13.5	15.3	5.6	6.0	3.2
75	HOSPITALS	2.60	1.80	43.7	13.1	12.2	13.7	8.6	5.2	3.5
76	RESPONSIBILITY (BEING IN CHARGE)	2.59	1.46	33.6	17.7	17.1	21.9	6.8	2.4	0.4
77	GOD	2.56	1.97	52.6	7.5	7.5	13.7	6.8	6.3	5.6
78	BECOMING NAUSEOUS	2.56	1.57	35.2	21.3	16.0	14.7	6.7	5.5	0.7
79	ANIMAL BLOOD	2.54	1.67	39.4	18.5	13.8	14.5	7.7	3.0	3.1
80	MEETING SOMEONE FOR THE FIRST TIME	2.51	1.53	35.8	20.3	18.9	14.3	4.9	4.6	1.2
81	ARGUING WITH PARENTS	2.49	1.72	46.2	11.4	14.5	11.9	9.3	4.7	2.1
82	IDEAS OF POSSIBLE HOMOSEXUALITY	2.48	2.15	56.8	12.2	5.6	5.1	2.3	7.7	10.3
83	CROWDED PLACES	2.47	1.62	42.4	16.5	13.5	14.7	6.7	5.1	1.1
84	CEMETERIES	2.45	1.68	43.6	17.0	12.4	13.9	6.7	3.4	3.1
85	THUNDER	2.41	1.67	43.9	19.1	12.1	12.6	3.9	6.4	2.0
86	VOMITING	2.36	1.64	45.5	18.3	11.0	13.0	6.1	3.9	2.1
87	SEE OTHER PEOPLE INJECTED	2.35	1.62	46.5	15.1	14.1	13.0	5.6	3.3	2.4
88	SICK PEOPLE	2.35	1.47	37.4	26.4	14.2	14.0	2.1	5.2	0.7
89	LEAVING HOME	2.35	1.66	50.9	10.8	10.1	15.8	6.3	5.0	1.1
90	FAINTING	2.33	1.60	46.3	17.0	12.5	13.8	4.2	4.5	1.6
91	BEING TEASED	2.31	1.44	40.3	22.9	14.1	14.3	5.9	1.6	1.0

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES: NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
92	WORMS	2.31	1.69	49.6	16.0	11.2	11.2	4.3	4.9	2.8
93	PEOPLE IN AUTHORITY	2.30	1.29	35.0	26.7	19.0	14.2	2.8	2.2	0.2
94	GERMS	2.28	1.54	45.5	19.1	13.6	12.2	5.4	1.9	2.3
95	SIGHT OF KNIVES OR SHARP OBJECTS	2.26	1.59	47.1	20.0	12.6	8.9	4.8	4.9	1.7
96	FEELING ANGRY	2.25	1.41	44.0	20.3	12.6	16.5	3.6	2.6	0.3
97	DOGS	2.25	1.61	50.4	16.2	9.7	13.9	3.7	4.2	1.8
98	MEDICAL ODORS	2.22	1.48	46.1	18.9	15.8	10.7	4.4	2.6	1.5
99	CROWDS	2.20	1.50	45.7	23.2	12.2	9.6	4.2	3.8	1.3
100	BEING IN AN ELEVATOR	2.13	1.49	51.2	18.0	10.3	12.3	3.5	4.1	0.6
101	CRIPPLED OR DEFORMED PEOPLE	2.12	1.45	49.8	19.3	13.0	9.4	4.9	2.4	1.1
102	DRIVING A CAR	2.11	1.57	55.3	15.6	9.5	9.1	4.6	4.6	1.2
103	BEING TOUCHED BY OTHERS	2.10	1.39	48.4	21.5	13.3	8.8	4.7	3.3	----
104	MARRIAGE	2.08	1.67	60.2	13.5	5.4	8.6	5.7	4.0	2.5
105	UNDERTAKERS	2.07	1.58	57.1	15.6	7.3	10.1	4.5	3.3	2.1
106	AUTOMOBILES	2.07	1.41	51.4	19.3	10.5	12.0	3.9	2.2	0.7
107	LOUD VOICES	2.04	1.30	49.0	22.4	10.5	13.0	3.6	1.5	----
108	SIRENS	2.04	1.41	51.8	20.7	10.9	9.8	2.9	3.0	0.8
109	BEING A PASSENGER IN A CAR	2.01	1.40	53.6	18.2	12.9	8.5	2.9	2.9	0.9
110	NUDE MEN	2.00	1.61	61.4	14.2	6.0	8.2	3.1	5.4	1.7
111	POLICE	1.97	1.32	54.6	15.6	16.3	8.7	3.1	0.5	1.2
112	INSECTICIDES	1.94	1.34	56.4	17.9	10.4	9.6	3.1	2.1	0.5
113	IMAGINARY CREATURES	1.92	1.56	63.0	13.6	9.5	6.0	2.5	1.4	4.0
114	WINDY WEATHER	1.91	1.39	60.2	14.7	9.9	8.0	4.5	1.7	0.9
115	UGLY PEOPLE	1.88	1.35	59.3	17.3	8.4	10.1	2.7	0.5	1.7
116	MASTURBATION	1.87	1.60	69.0	8.7	7.5	6.2	1.4	4.3	2.9
117	TAKING MEDICINE	1.84	1.30	58.6	20.1	7.7	9.5	1.0	2.3	0.8
118	CATS	1.79	1.40	66.0	15.1	6.1	5.0	3.9	2.8	1.1
119	NUDE WOMEN	1.79	1.49	68.1	14.3	4.5	5.6	1.4	3.7	2.4
120	BEING WITH A MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITE SEX	1.75	1.20	60.8	20.5	6.9	8.6	1.2	1.7	0.3
121	BECOMING SEXUALLY AROUSED	1.70	1.33	67.3	17.3	5.5	3.9	1.8	2.8	1.4
122	SCHOOL	1.66	1.13	64.9	18.8	6.3	6.4	2.6	0.8	0.2
123	CROSSING STREETS	1.56	0.86	61.0	28.2	6.0	3.5	1.3	----	----
124	DIRT	1.54	1.25	77.9	8.8	4.8	3.4	1.5	2.3	1.2
125	DULL WEATHER	1.51	0.93	70.3	15.6	8.9	3.2	1.7	0.2	----
126	FISH	1.50	1.05	73.4	16.2	2.1	5.7	1.2	0.6	0.7

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES						
				NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
127	JOURNEYS BY TRAIN	1.49	1.00	72.8	14.3	7.2	3.6	1.0	0.2	0.8
128	BIRDS	1.47	1.16	80.1	8.6	3.4	3.8	1.7	1.5	0.9
129	MINISTERS OR PRIESTS	1.46	0.94	73.5	15.8	4.8	3.9	1.5	0.3	0.2
130	JOURNEYS BY BUS	1.42	0.92	76.1	14.7	3.3	4.2	0.7	1.0	----
131	KISSING	1.41	0.96	79.5	9.5	4.3	5.2	0.6	1.0	----
132	LARGE OPEN SPACES	1.40	1.02	79.4	12.2	3.0	2.3	1.3	1.2	0.6
133	NOISE OF VACUUM CLEANER	1.12	0.49	92.7	3.9	1.8	1.5	----	----	----

TABLE 6

RANK, MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND DISTRIBUTION OF FEAR RATING FOR EACH ITEM RATED BY MALES (N=200)

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES						
				NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
1	DEATH OF A LOVED ONE	4.59	1.71	7.8	4.9	12.9	17.6	18.3	28.3	10.2
2	ILLNESS OR INJURY TO LOVED ONES	4.52	1.47	5.6	2.8	12.5	27.5	21.4	24.9	5.3
3	UNTIMELY OR EARLY DEATH	3.64	1.86	18.9	14.0	12.0	19.1	16.4	14.8	4.8
4	HURTING THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS	3.56	1.51	12.7	11.3	21.1	29.2	13.4	11.9	0.3
5	FAILURE	3.56	1.64	14.6	16.8	12.5	23.0	21.9	9.4	1.7
6	SPEAKING IN PUBLIC	3.46	1.70	17.0	15.2	17.8	20.5	16.8	9.2	3.4
7	AUTO ACCIDENTS	3.41	1.74	20.2	14.2	15.6	20.7	16.7	9.6	3.0
8	PROSPECTS OF A SURGICAL OPERATION	3.39	1.79	21.4	16.2	9.8	24.3	14.5	9.9	3.8
9	BEING PUNISHED BY GOD	3.34	2.11	31.8	11.3	10.1	15.8	11.4	8.8	10.8
10	FALLING	3.28	1.69	17.8	20.4	16.5	21.8	11.8	7.8	3.8
11	LOSING CONTROL OF YOURSELF	3.28	1.72	20.5	18.1	16.0	17.8	16.9	7.6	3.0
12	LOOKING FOOLISH	3.25	1.52	15.9	18.4	20.8	22.2	15.0	7.4	0.3
13	DEATH	3.23	1.94	29.0	12.7	13.2	19.7	8.5	10.7	6.2
14	FEELING REJECTED BY OTHERS	3.21	1.51	15.9	21.9	15.8	25.7	14.0	6.1	0.6
15	FIRE	3.20	1.75	26.6	11.5	14.1	22.9	15.8	5.5	3.5
16	NOT BEING A SUCCESS	3.15	1.72	24.0	17.7	14.2	20.5	13.1	8.5	2.0
17	SUFFOCATING	3.13	1.88	26.3	21.1	11.9	14.2	11.1	11.3	4.0
18	DEEP WATER	3.12	1.82	28.2	14.2	13.8	21.6	10.7	6.5	5.0
19	MAKING MISTAKES	3.10	1.45	17.0	20.2	21.8	22.2	14.3	4.2	0.3
20	FEELING DISAPPROVED OF	3.02	1.38	15.8	24.0	20.5	26.6	9.4	3.1	0.6
21	STINGING INSECTS	3.02	1.66	24.3	20.5	14.3	19.9	12.8	6.6	1.5
22	BEING IN A FIGHT	2.97	1.48	20.4	21.2	20.6	22.8	9.9	4.2	0.9
23	LOOKING DOWN FROM HIGH BUILDINGS	2.96	1.80	28.0	23.9	8.3	19.2	8.2	8.9	3.5
24	LOSING A JOB	2.96	1.66	28.9	16.7	12.7	21.0	14.2	5.6	0.9
25	BEING DRESSED UNSUITABLY (WEARING WRONG CLOTHES FOR THE OCCASION)	2.92	1.51	22.9	20.8	19.9	20.5	10.4	4.9	0.6

TABLE 6 - CONTINUED

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES: NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
26	PEOPLE WHO SEEM INSANE	2.89	1.33	16.3	26.8	23.7	21.0	9.6	2.3	0.3
27	BEING CRITICIZED	2.84	1.47	22.6	26.2	14.2	23.3	8.9	4.8	----
28	ROLLER COASTERS	2.80	1.70	33.8	12.9	18.9	18.6	9.1	3.0	3.8
29	STRANGE DOGS	2.79	1.45	25.7	20.3	18.1	26.9	3.8	4.8	0.3
30	WITNESSING SURGICAL OPERATIONS	2.77	1.61	29.8	21.2	16.8	14.8	10.1	7.1	0.3
31	BEING MISUNDERSTOOD	2.74	1.37	24.3	21.2	23.3	21.2	7.1	3.0	----
32	TAKING WRITTEN TESTS	2.74	1.62	33.0	15.2	18.2	19.9	8.7	2.2	2.9
33	MICE OR RATS	2.72	1.56	31.2	19.3	15.6	20.0	10.5	1.6	1.8
34	ILLNESS	2.70	1.47	30.1	18.8	16.7	22.3	9.0	3.0	----
35	BEING WITH DRUNKS	2.70	1.55	31.3	19.8	15.0	20.5	8.4	4.7	0.3
36	ANGRY PEOPLE	2.68	1.30	22.9	24.9	23.2	20.8	6.8	1.1	0.3
37	THOUGHTS OF BEING MENTALLY ILL	2.65	1.68	36.4	17.9	15.3	14.5	7.2	7.4	1.1
38	SUDDEN NOISES	2.65	1.41	26.7	23.7	22.4	16.0	7.7	3.2	0.3
39	GOD	2.65	1.91	46.00	12.6	6.0	17.6	5.9	7.2	4.7
40	PARTING FROM FRIENDS	2.60	1.48	33.2	19.2	16.4	19.6	8.6	3.0	----
41	BEING SEEN UNCLOTHED	2.58	1.57	35.9	17.2	18.1	17.1	5.9	4.5	1.2
42	SWIMMING ALONE	2.53	1.70	40.9	18.3	12.3	13.0	8.4	4.8	2.3
43	BATS	2.52	1.48	32.8	26.1	12.8	19.1	4.7	3.6	0.9
44	WEAPONS	2.51	1.60	36.8	21.7	14.8	16.4	3.3	4.7	2.3
45	BEING SELF CONSCIOUS	2.51	1.51	36.2	20.2	15.8	16.4	6.8	4.2	0.3
46	PREMATURE HEART BEATS (MISSING A BEAT)	2.49	1.51	37.3	18.1	18.9	14.7	7.0	2.9	1.1
47	DEAD PEOPLE	2.46	1.43	35.8	20.6	17.4	17.1	6.3	2.8	----
48	BEING IGNORED	2.44	1.38	34.6	22.1	17.6	18.4	4.8	2.6	----
49	OPEN WOUNDS	2.44	1.36	27.1	35.5	16.5	13.3	3.3	3.5	0.9
50	ONE PERSON BULLYING ANOTHER	2.38	1.36	36.0	23.2	16.0	18.5	4.5	1.5	0.3
51	BEING IN A STRANGE PLACE	2.35	1.29	33.8	26.4	16.3	19.2	2.8	1.1	0.3
52	JOURNEYS BY AIR	2.34	1.59	44.2	20.4	9.8	16.3	2.8	5.0	1.5
53	DENTISTS	2.30	1.60	44.3	22.3	14.1	5.2	7.3	5.9	1.0
54	TOUGH LOOKING PEOPLE	2.29	1.12	27.5	35.8	21.1	12.7	1.8	1.1	----
55	GERMS	2.29	1.45	43.6	17.9	17.1	12.2	5.8	3.4	----
56	HARMLESS SNAKES	2.29	1.62	47.0	19.5	11.0	11.2	5.2	3.8	2.4
57	IDEAS OF POSSIBLE HOMOSEXUALITY	2.29	1.94	57.4	16.2	4.4	3.7	3.9	9.9	4.6

TABLE 6 - CONTINUED

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
58	ENTERING A ROOM WHERE OTHER PEOPLE ARE ALREADY SEATED	2.27	1.34	37.2	27.9	16.0	10.9	5.9	1.8	0.3
59	BEING WATCHED WORKING	2.22	1.30	39.8	24.8	16.4	13.5	4.1	1.2	0.3
60	SICK PEOPLE	2.22	1.22	36.4	28.1	17.8	14.2	2.3	0.9	0.3
61	RECEIVING INJECTIONS	2.22	1.33	40.9	23.2	17.6	13.1	2.4	2.5	0.3
62	HOSPITALS	2.21	1.42	45.9	18.4	15.8	12.0	5.3	2.0	0.6
63	BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR DECISIONS	2.20	1.29	39.5	27.4	13.5	14.9	2.6	2.0	----
64	ENCLOSED PLACES	2.19	1.45	46.7	20.4	12.7	12.9	3.8	2.3	1.2
65	MEETING SOMEONE FOR THE FIRST TIME	2.18	1.22	39.4	23.6	21.7	12.4	1.8	0.6	0.6
66	LIGHTNING	2.17	1.35	43.9	24.2	11.0	13.8	6.1	0.7	0.3
67	BECOMING NAUSEOUS	2.16	1.41	45.3	23.6	12.3	10.7	5.1	2.4	0.6
68	VOMITING	2.14	1.38	46.3	20.4	17.2	9.1	3.9	2.5	0.6
69	HIGH PLACES ON LAND	2.13	1.57	51.7	21.0	8.2	8.6	4.6	4.1	1.9
70	ARGUING WITH PARENTS	2.13	1.42	50.0	19.2	9.1	14.5	4.2	3.0	----
71	BEING ALONE	2.10	1.30	44.0	26.7	11.9	12.1	2.9	2.4	----
72	SEEING A FIGHT	2.08	1.25	45.0	23.9	15.2	11.4	3.7	0.6	0.3
73	RESPONSIBILITY (BEING IN CHARGE)	2.07	1.24	44.9	26.8	8.8	16.5	2.1	0.9	----
74	CRIPPLED OR DEFORMED PEOPLE	2.06	1.18	41.5	30.6	11.7	13.8	1.2	1.2	----
75	STRANGERS	2.05	1.09	39.6	29.7	18.7	10.4	1.2	----	0.3
76	LEAVING HOME	2.04	1.40	54.9	14.9	10.8	11.5	6.4	1.5	----
77	FEELING ANGRY	2.04	1.30	47.5	24.1	13.3	10.1	2.9	1.1	1.0
78	BEING TEASED	2.03	1.29	48.2	23.9	12.7	9.6	3.7	1.7	0.3
79	FLYING INSECTS	2.03	1.22	46.1	26.1	11.2	13.5	2.5	----	0.6
80	PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS	2.02	1.25	47.8	22.1	16.3	10.2	1.8	1.6	0.3
81	PEOPLE IN AUTHORITY	2.02	1.18	43.1	29.2	16.2	7.3	2.9	1.0	0.3
82	BOATING	2.01	1.30	50.8	19.6	15.0	9.2	3.7	1.1	0.5
83	CRAWLING INSECTS	2.00	1.14	43.9	28.8	13.6	10.5	3.2	----	----
84	MARRIAGE	2.00	1.54	61.8	11.6	6.4	10.6	5.8	2.3	1.4
85	CROWDED PLACES	1.99	1.29	51.1	20.7	14.3	7.8	4.2	2.0	----
86	HUMAN BLOOD	1.98	1.34	53.9	18.9	11.3	11.2	1.8	2.1	0.8
87	HARMLESS SPIDERS	1.93	1.43	55.1	23.5	7.6	7.2	2.6	1.3	2.7
88	POLICE	1.93	1.15	50.9	19.1	19.9	7.0	2.6	0.6	----
89	MEDICAL ODORS	1.91	1.17	50.3	24.2	13.6	9.5	0.6	1.9	----
90	DOCTORS	1.89	1.16	52.5	22.1	13.3	9.9	0.7	1.5	----
91	BEING IN A PASSENGER CAR	1.88	1.21	53.2	24.2	10.8	6.7	3.9	0.8	0.3

MALES

TABLE 6 - CONTINUED

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES: NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
92	DARKNESS	1.87	1.14	51.9	24.3	12.0	9.6	0.8	1.4	----
93	INSECTICIDES	1.87	1.22	53.6	25.3	9.8	4.7	5.4	1.2	----
94	CROWDS	1.86	1.14	50.7	27.8	11.8	6.2	1.7	1.7	----
95	DOGS	1.84	1.20	56.0	21.5	10.2	8.7	2.0	1.7	----
96	CEMETERIES	1.84	1.11	52.7	25.5	9.6	10.3	1.6	----	0.3
97	FAINTING	1.83	1.30	60.7	18.8	4.5	10.7	3.3	2.0	----
98	THUNDERSTORMS	1.83	1.14	57.0	18.5	11.3	11.6	1.1	0.5	----
99	MASTURBATION	1.79	1.56	69.5	12.6	6.4	2.1	2.8	3.1	3.6
100	SIGHT OF KNIVES OR SHARP OBJECTS	1.79	1.22	60.2	19.4	8.4	6.8	3.7	1.4	----
101	WINDY WEATHER	1.74	1.11	59.7	20.5	10.0	7.4	1.2	1.2	----
102	DEAD ANIMALS	1.73	1.13	61.1	19.5	8.9	7.5	1.8	1.1	----
103	BEING TOUCHED BY OTHERS	1.71	1.07	60.6	20.4	9.0	8.0	1.7	0.3	----
104	LOUD VOICES	1.68	1.07	62.3	19.3	8.7	8.5	0.3	0.6	0.3
105	ANIMAL BLOOD	1.68	1.04	60.8	22.4	6.8	8.9	0.8	----	0.3
106	SCHOOL	1.67	1.05	61.4	21.4	9.2	5.2	2.2	0.6	----
107	TAKING MEDICINE	1.65	1.12	66.2	16.6	8.2	5.0	3.1	0.9	----
108	SEE OTHER PEOPLE INJECTED	1.63	1.09	66.8	16.7	6.9	7.5	1.0	0.8	0.3
109	AUTOMOBILES	1.61	0.96	63.7	20.3	7.9	7.8	----	0.3	----
110	BEING WITH A MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITE SEX	1.59	0.91	61.5	23.3	11.8	1.8	1.1	0.5	----
111	UNDERTAKERS	1.59	1.02	65.1	20.2	9.2	2.6	2.3	----	0.6
112	THUNDER	1.57	0.92	65.7	18.5	9.6	5.7	0.5	----	----
113	BEING IN AN ELEVATOR	1.56	0.97	65.5	21.6	6.9	3.9	1.5	0.3	0.3
114	MINISTERS OR PRIESTS	1.51	0.92	69.1	18.3	6.7	5.1	0.3	0.6	----
115	UGLY PEOPLE	1.48	0.83	67.8	20.3	8.8	2.8	----	----	0.3
116	SIRENS	1.46	0.88	70.5	19.7	5.7	2.3	1.5	----	0.3
117	DRIVING A CAR	1.46	0.75	66.3	24.9	5.6	3.2	----	----	----
118	BECOMING SEXUALLY AROUSED	1.43	0.95	76.4	12.5	6.3	3.2	----	1.3	0.3
119	IMAGINARY CREATURES	1.42	0.81	73.5	15.7	7.1	3.3	----	0.3	--
120	NUDE MEN	1.39	0.87	77.1	13.8	4.5	2.9	1.4	----	0.3
121	DULL WEATHER	1.38	0.71	72.4	19.7	5.1	2.8	----	----	----
122	CROSSING STREETS	1.37	0.73	73.9	18.5	5.2	1.5	0.9	----	----
123	KISSING	1.37	0.83	78.7	10.5	7.5	2.4	0.6	----	0.3
124	NUDE WOMEN	1.35	0.84	79.6	11.2	6.0	2.2	----	0.7	0.3
125	CATS	1.35	0.83	76.8	17.8	2.6	0.3	1.7	0.9	----
126	DIRT	1.28	0.77	81.9	13.7	1.8	1.4	0.6	----	0.6

MALES

TABLE 6 - CONTINUED

RANK	ITEM	MEAN	S.D.	FEAR RATINGS IN PERCENTAGES: NONE 1	VERY LITTLE 2	LITTLE 3	SOME 4	MUCH 5	VERY MUCH 6	TERROR 7
127	WORMS	1.24	0.63	83.6	12.0	2.0	1.8	0.5	----	----
128	BIRDS	1.23	0.54	81.5	14.6	3.0	0.8	----	----	----
129	JOURNEYS BY BUS	1.21	0.54	83.6	12.7	2.5	1.2	----	----	----
130	FISH	1.21	0.69	86.2	10.9	1.1	0.6	0.6	----	0.6
131	JOURNEYS BY TRAIN	1.19	0.55	85.5	11.5	2.1	0.7	----	0.3	----
132	LARGE OPEN SPACES	1.18	0.47	84.4	13.8	0.9	0.9	----	----	----
133	NOISE OF VACUUM CLEANER	1.08	0.32	93.1	6.0	0.6	0.3	----	----	----

a success," men and women rate them as equally fearful. Otherwise, women have higher fear ratings than men.

We believe a factor analysis which presumably identifies categories of fear should be performed on items which are at least moderately rated as fearful, and not on those which rarely elicit a fear response. For our factor analyses, then, we selected only those items with a mean fear rating of 3 ("Little") or higher. For the females, 52 items met this criterion, as did 21 items for the male sample. The 21 male high-fear items are all represented among the top 52 female items. Agras et al. (1969) reported the 11 most prevalent intense fears in their sample. Of these, snakes, heights, illness, death, storms, and dentists were represented among the top 52 female fear items. Illness and death, were among the 21 male fear items. By far, the top two items in our survey were "Death of a loved one" and "Illness or injury to a loved one," for both sexes. Agras et al. found snakes and heights to be the most prevalent intense fears for males, and snakes and flying for females. For our males, snakes and heights ranked 56th and 23rd, respectively, and for our females, snakes and flying ranked 21st and 63rd. We suspect the discrepancy is not mainly due to regional differences or to the different methods used to measure intense fears. It is more likely that Agras and his colleagues did not ask about death, illness or injury in relation to loved ones of their respondents.

Separate factor analyses using the varimax rotational procedure were performed on the 52 items for the females and the 21 items for the males. The procedures used by Wade (1978) to insure the appropriateness of factor analysis were performed with the exception of determining test-retest reliability. The latter test was precluded by the procedures used to safeguard the anonymity of respondents. Bartlett's test of sphericity

(Bartlett, 1950) confirmed the adequacy of the correlation matrix. The same factors emerged in oblique-rotation factor analyses performed on the entire sample and in varimax analyses performed on 50% random samples of the total N for both men and women. The criteria used by Wade (1978) for selecting factors were employed: An Eigenvalue of at least 1.00, and each factor with at least four items loading at .40 or better.

Five factors emerged for the females and two factors for the males and are presented in Tables 7 and 8. The first two factors for the females appear to be equivalent to the two male factors. The first factor, fear of social rejection, accounts for 55% of the females' variance and 70% of the males'. The second factor accounts for 12.3% of the females' variance and 11.6% of the males'. We have labeled it fear of unpredictable danger or threat to life.

Factor 3 for females, fear of aggression (6.9% of variance), loads "Seeing a fight," "Being in a fight," "Angry people," "One person bullying another," and "Tough looking people." Factor 4 (5.4% of variance) is the commonly found fear of small insects and animals, and factor 5 (4.9% of variance) is fear of death of self and loved ones.

As Rachman points out, "In all the factor analytic studies, a fear of certain kinds of social situations or events emerges as a clear and strong factor. Similarly a fear of animals and/or insects is always present, as is a fear of harm, injury, or loss" (1978, p. 136). This study is no exception to that generalization. The results of this study, however, do constitute an exception to Bamber's (1979) observation that most factor analytic studies have found a tissue-damage factor (p. 67). Although fear of death of self and loved ones and fear of aggression emerge as factors for females, there is no factor for either sex that

TABLE 7

SUMMARY OF FACTOR ANALYSIS OF HIGHEST 52 FEAR ITEMS FOR FEMALES

FACTOR	EIGEN-VALUE	% OF VARIANCE	ITEMS	LOADING
FACTOR 1 FEAR OF SOCIAL REJECTION	16.1	54.8	HURTING THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS	.56
			FEELING REJECTED BY OTHERS	.75
			FAILURE	.70
			LOOKING FOOLISH	.79
			FEELING DISAPPROVED OF	.80
			PARTING FROM FRIENDS	.44
			BEING CRITICIZED	.72
			BEING DRESSED UNSUITABLY	.58
			LOSING CONTROL OF YOURSELF	.64
			MAKING MISTAKES	.75
			BEING SELF CONSCIOUS	.67
			LOSING A JOB	.50
			NOT BEING A SUCCESS	.68
			BEING MISUNDERSTOOD	.63
FACTOR 2 FEAR OF UN-PREDICABLE DANGER OR THREAT TO LIFE	3.6	12.3	FIRE	.41
			AUTO ACCIDENTS	.49
			WEAPONS	.40
			SUFFOCATING	.44
			BEING WITH DRUNKS	.51
			ILLNESS	.40
			BEING SEEN UNCLOTHED	.50
			BEING PUNISHED BY GOD	.50
			THOUGHTS OF BEING MENTALLY ILL	.64
FACTOR 3 FEAR OF AGGRESSION	2.02	6.9	SEEING A FIGHT	.72
			BEING IN A FIGHT	.45
			ANGRY PEOPLE	.62
			ONE PERSON BULLYING ANOTHER	.76
			TOUGH LOOKING PEOPLE	.63
FACTOR 4 FEAR OF SMALL INSECTS AND ANIMALS	1.58	5.4	MICE OR RATS	.71
			BATS	.60
			STINGING INSECTS	.40
			HARMLESS SNAKES	.56
			STRANGE DOGS	.45
			LIGHTNING	.40
FACTOR 5 FEAR OF DEATH OF SELF AND LOVED ONES	1.44	4.9	DEATH OF A LOVED ONE	.65
			ILLNESS OR INJURY TO LOVED ONES	.46
			UNTIMELY OR EARLY DEATH	.69
			DEATH	.68

TABLE 8

SUMMARY OF FACTOR ANALYSIS OF HIGHEST 21 FEAR ITEMS FOR MALES

FACTOR	EIGEN-VALUE	% OF VARIANCE	ITEMS	LOADING
FACTOR 1	7.7	69.6	HURTING THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS	.48
FEAR OF			FAILURE	.70
SOCIAL			LOSING CONTROL OF YOURSELF	.40
REJECTION			LOOKING FOOLISH	.73
			FEELING REJECTED BY OTHERS	.77
			NOT BEING A SUCCESS	.64
			MAKING MISTAKES	.71
			FEELING DISAPPROVED OF	.76
FACTOR 2	1.2	11.2	AUTO ACCIDENTS	.54
FEAR OF UN-			BEING PUNISHED BY GOD	.59
PREDICTABLE			FALLING	.40
DANGER OR			SUFFOCATING	.55
THREAT TO LIFE				

relates to tissue damage per se. The greater age-range employed in this study, in conjunction with the exclusion of low-fear items from the analyses, may account for the absence of this factor.

Wade's (1978) study attempted to insure the validity of the use of factor analysis, as did this study. The fact that our results are so different indicates the powerful influence of the methods of item and sample selection. Given the heterogeneity of our sample, the separate analyses of males and females, and the elimination from analysis of low-fear items, our results may be closer than those of previous studies to the structure of the cognitive component of fears in the general population.

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